

**CLAIMS**

Now, therefore, the following is claimed:

1. An element management system (EMS) for managing elements of a

5 communication network, comprising:

memory for storing template data, the template data indicative of control values  
for controlling a network element; and

a system controller configured to identify a plurality of network elements within  
the communication network based on user input and to automatically provision each of  
10 the identified network elements based on the template data.

2. The EMS of claim 1, wherein the system controller is configured to  
automatically provision each of the identified network elements in response to user input.

15 3. The EMS of claim 1, wherein:

the EMS is interfaced with a plurality of clients;

the memory stores sets of graphical user interface (GUI) code, each of the sets of  
GUI code defining a different GUI;

the system controller is configured to select one of the sets of GUI code and to  
20 provide the selected set of GUI code to one of the clients; and

the one client is configured to display a GUI based on the selected set of GUI code  
and to define the template data based on user inputs received by the one client, the one  
client further configured to transmit the template data to the EMS.

4. The EMS of claim 1, wherein the EMS is interfaced with a plurality of clients, and wherein the system controller is configured to receive the template data from one of the clients and to store the received template data in the memory.

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5. The EMS of claim 4, wherein the system controller receives the template data from the one client during a first communication session that is between the EMS and the one client, and wherein the system controller is configured to provide the template data to another of the clients during a second communication session that is between the EMS and the other client.

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6. The EMS of claim 5, wherein the system manager is configured to automatically provision each of the identified network elements in response to a request received from the other client during the second communication session.

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7. The EMS of claim 5, wherein the system manager is configured to receive template data from the other client during the second communication session and to update the template data stored in the memory based on the template data received from the other client.

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8. An element management system (EMS) for managing elements of a communication network, comprising:

memory; and

a system manager configured to receive a provision template and to store the

provision template in the memory, the provision template indicative of control values for  
controlling a network element, the system manager configured to receive a request that  
identifies the provision template and to retrieve the provision template in response to the  
request, the system manager further configured to select a plurality of network elements  
within the communication network and to automatically provision each of the selected  
network elements based on the retrieved provision template.

9. The system of claim 8, wherein:

the EMS is interfaced with a plurality of clients;

the system controller is configured to provide the retrieved provision template to

one of the clients in response to the request;

the one client is configured to change the provision template based on user inputs  
and to communicate the changed provision template to the EMS; and

the system controller, in provisioning the selected network elements, is configured  
to utilize control values indicated by the changed provision template.

10. The EMS of claim 8, wherein the system controller is configured to  
automatically provision the selected network elements in response to the request.

11. The EMS of claim 8, wherein:

the EMS is interfaced with a plurality of clients;

the request is transmitted from one of the clients;

the system manager is configured to receive, from the one client, data that

5 identifies the selected network elements; and

the system manager is configured to select each of the selected network elements  
based on the data received from the one client.

12. A method for managing elements of a communication network,

10 comprising the steps of:

receiving template data, the template data indicative of control values for  
controlling a network element;

identifying a plurality of network elements within the communication network  
based on user input; and

15 automatically provisioning each of the identified network elements based on the  
template data.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein the provisioning step is performed in  
response to user input.

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14. A method for managing elements of a communication network,  
comprising the steps of:

defining a provision template based on user input, the provision template  
indicative of control values for controlling a network element;

5 receiving a request that identifies the provision template;  
retrieving the provision template in response to the request;  
selecting a plurality of network elements within the communication network; and  
automatically provisioning each of the selected network elements based on the  
retrieved provision template.

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15. The method of claim 14, further comprising the steps of:

displaying the retrieved provision template in response to the request; and

updating the provision template based on user inputs,

wherein the provisioning step includes the step of storing control values indicated

15 by the updated provision template into each of the selected network elements.

16. The method of claim 14, wherein the provisioning step is performed in  
response to the request.

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